

# CHURCH UNION



## NEWS AND VIEWS

FEBRUARY 1960

---

News of Decisions

# CHURCH UNION

## NEWS AND VIEWS

(New Series)

Vol. 5 }

Organ of the Negotiating Committee for Church Union in  
North India and Pakistan

{ No. 1

### CONTENTS

|  | Page |
|--|------|
| Editorial: Expectation and Testimony ... ..                            | 1    |
| Common Worship and Unity: Rt. Rev. W. Q. Lash ... ..                   | 2    |
| The UCNI Book of Common Order: Rev. Vaughan Rees ... ..                | 4    |
| An Impression of the Negotiating Committee: Rev. Bruce Henry ... ..    | 6    |
| An Impression of the Negotiating Committee: Rt. Rev. Chandu Ray ... .. | 9    |
| Actions of the UCNI: Resolutions of the General Assembly ... ..        | 11   |
| Actions of the CIPBC: Decisions of the General Council ... ..          | 12   |
| Resolutions of the Council of Baptist Churches ... ..                  | 14   |
| Book Review: The Faith of the Church ... ..                            | 15   |

Opinions expressed in articles in *Church Union—News and Views* are those of the writers and not necessarily of the Editor or of the Negotiating Committee.

*Editor:* Rev. William Stewart, Serampore College, Serampore, West Bengal.

*Manager:* (To whom all subscriptions should be sent)  
Miss E. L. Saunders, Masha'l Printing Press, Kharar, District Ambala.

*Subscription Rates:* India and Pakistan ... .. Rs. 2.00 per year.  
U. K. and Europe ... .. 4s. per year.  
U. S. A. and Canada ... .. 0.50 per year.

Published quarterly in February, May, August and November of each year.

Material should reach the Editor not later than 25th of the month previous to intended publication.

Subscriptions in U. K. and Europe may be paid through the Rev. Frank Short, Edinburgh House, 2 Eaton Gate, London S. W. 1.



# Church Union

## News and Views

(New Series)

---

### Expectation and Testimony

THE churches are moving towards their decision about the *Plan of Union*. This issue records actions taken by two of them, the UCNI and the CIPBC, the supreme courts of each of which have taken the first steps required under their respective constitutions, to make possible final acceptance of the *Plan*. The Methodist Church in North India had already taken such action.

All such actions reflect a growing atmosphere of expectancy as the churches contemplate the prospect of living together within one wider fellowship. At the same time it is observed that most of them, whether in preparing for a decision or actually in taking a decision, have felt it right to record some statement of interpretation or of values which they count precious in their heritage, and which they believe to be conserved within the *Plan of Union*. Some years ago the Methodist Church in Southern Asia recorded its experience of continuity through the Church and its whole ministry which it believed to be expressed in its interpretation of episcopacy. Appendix C of the *Plan* takes the form of a statement of principle by the Baptist Churches which underlines their treasuring, among other things, of "reasonable provision for all believers in seeking the mind of Christ in the affairs of the Church so far as they are able". In declaring their approval of the *Plan*, the General Assembly of the United Church of Northern India reiterates their assurance of

the full validity of their ministry as conferred by the grace of God and recognise within the *Plan* "a continuation of that system of Church government which this Church has practised and has always recognised as founded on and agreeable to the Word of God"—a clear reference to that conciliar element which is prominent in the proposed Constitution. Finally, the General Council of the Church of India, Pakistan, Burma and Ceylon, in giving their approval, have equally clearly stated that, in their view, through the rite of unification "episcopal ordination is bestowed on those not previously so ordained" thus clarifying the nature of the gift of God which in their view it may be believed that He will bestow in response to the Church's prayer.

Many may well ask why it should be necessary for this plethora of statements to be issued by those who contemplate acceptance of a common *Plan of Union*. It may also well be true that after only a few years of experience within union of the enrichment which that will bring, people will look back to these statements with surprise that there ever was a time when negotiating bodies were so anxious lest values which they treasured should be despised in the United Church. Probably many of the negotiators would not today find it necessary, for their own sake, to record such statements.

Nevertheless we believe that the desire to place such statements on record is understandable, particularly when we remember



that the *Plan* sets out to make room, within one fellowship, for Christian brethren and for Christian bodies, who do not claim to have ironed out all their differences. What would be a grievous and intolerable thing would be if any of these statements should be of such a categorical or exclusive character as to take away from the sincerity and the humbleness of the faith in which we shall together wait upon God to grant us those gifts which it is His will to bestow on each. What also would be grievous and indeed disastrous would be if any of the statements passed a negative judgement on the values treasured by one or other of the churches with which union is contemplated. But, if these errors are avoided, is it altogether strange that Christian churches should find it fitting to give clear and public testimony to things in which they have experienced the manifest blessing of Almighty God even through the years of their division? They are not denying—indeed the *Plan* most ex-

plicity acknowledges—that God's blessing has also been given to others, but neither are they turning away from those features of their own corporate experience in which they are thankfully aware that God has been with them.

The Church authorities concerned have to think not only of themselves but also of the multitudes of the members of their churches who have not effectively met those of the other traditions, and who may still be apprehensive lest precious things be forgotten. They have also to think of brethren in other parts of the world whose continued fellowship and understanding they desire.

It is in such circumstances that the statements have been made, and we believe that they are meant to be read not as negative judgements on others but rather as positive testimony to things which have been found to be of value in the past and which, if it be God's will, they would gladly share with others in the future.

---

## Common Worship and Unity

RT. REV. W. Q. LASH

SOME years ago at a Negotiating Committee on Church Union in Ceylon we were discussing the elements in the several churches which had played a significant part in giving them their special character and had been a focus of their internal cohesion. The Methodists spoke of their tradition of hymnology as being of first importance in their own development. For Anglicans the Book of Common Prayer has had a vital place. *Lex Credendi, Lex Orandi* has been more than a mere formula. With us of the CIPBC the Book of Common Prayer has its place in the solemn declaration made by one about to be ordained, or about to be licensed in one of our dioceses if already ordained. At the Lambeth Conferences the importance of the Book has repeatedly been recognised as a focus of unity within the Anglican Communion.

This does not mean that we are bound to a slavish uniformity. Several, if not most,

of the churches or provinces of the Anglican Communion have been experimenting in revision, but in the essential forms of worship care is taken not to depart too far from the norm set by the Book of the Church of England of 1662. A greater variety is to be found in other supplementary forms.

With us the Episcopal Synod, consisting of diocesan bishops, sitting with assessors who are both clergy and laymen, is the primary authority in these forms of worship and their regulation. The Synod can permit, and over the last thirty years has permitted, experiment. Forms can only become the official forms for the whole Church, if the General Council (Bishops, Clergy and Laity in three Houses) concurs. In January 1960 such concurrence has been asked for in regard to a new Book of Common Prayer for the Province.

What are the common forms? The first are for Morning and Evening Prayer, and



provide, every day, for the reading of the Psalms (all through every month) and the Bible. The Old Testament is read through once in the year, and the New Testament twice. Special provisions for reading are made for the special seasons of the Church's Year, and the Festivals. Who uses these forms every day? The clergy are under solemn obligation to do so, publicly if possible, but at least privately. From this it can be seen how fully the Bible, and that too the whole Bible, not just favourite passages, is central to the spiritual discipline of the clergy. The laity are not often able to take full advantage of this daily provision. Some do so, but more attend one or other, Morning or Evening, on Sundays. In addition to the set prayers and canticles in the forms, other prayers and thanksgivings and litanies are provided to go with them, and opportunity for the preaching of the Word of God and singing of hymns.

Christian Initiation calls for forms for Making a Catechumen, Baptism, a Catechism of essential instruction, and Confirmation. In the new Book there is a section on the Ministry of Reconciliation, which includes a form for the Renewal of Baptismal Vows which may help to meet the need of those to whom a 'conviction' comes some years after Baptism or Confirmation, which always includes such renewal, as well as providing for more general occasions of rededication in Discipleship.

The main liturgical forms are for the Lord's Supper. In quite a number of our churches this has taken so much the chief place in Sunday worship, that it is attended when Morning or Evening Prayer are not. It has always had scripture reading in the first half of the service, with provision for a sermon, before going on to the sacramental part. Hitherto the scripture has been almost entirely appointed from the New Testament. In the new Book provision is now made also for the Old Testament, so that the whole service can provide a full ministry of the Word and Sacrament. The laity are given a greater part than before, and, indeed, it will be possible for the first, scriptural, part to be taken by a layman, when a priest is not available to celebrate the sacramental part. A Collect, Old Testament Lesson, Epistle, and Gospel are provided for all Sundays and Festivals.

The latter part of the Book provides forms for occasions such as marriage and burial and ordination, and a section of Prayers with the Sick. Perhaps our brethren of other churches may feel that we provide too much, and leave too little to the initiative of the Minister. On the whole I do not think this proves to be so in practice. A service still needs careful preparation, especially in Morning and Evening Prayer, suitable additional prayers must be found, or even drawn up. Lessons from Scripture must be studied to be suitably read, and preached upon, at all services, and suitable music and hymns discovered. On the other hand clergy and laity are assured of a wide range of scriptural passages, and doctrine, and the onesidedness of special attractions of a limited number of passages is avoided. The laity also find in such a Book a great store of devotional treasure, drawn from the experience of the Church down the ages, with which to enrich their private prayers, as well as give them a full opportunity of taking part in the public worship of the congregation.

The official Book of Common Prayer has to be a conservative document, as it contains forms which the wide range of worshippers in our Church can use without scruple of conscience. In this matter it is interesting to find that there are points on which the Church of South India goes further than we can, which is a happy augury for the Church of North India/Pakistan! The Episcopal Synod can, however, authorise other forms, and it is proposed that we have a supplement of such of these as may be used with the official Book. Here would be found various ceremonies which bring out the dramatic character of certain occasions, such as the blessing of a Christmas crib at Christmas, candles on the commemoration of our Lord's Presentation in the Temple and old Simeon's song about 'The Light to lighten the Gentiles', ashes for Ash Wednesday, the first day of Lent, palms for Palm Sunday and other enrichments. Only recently I had a letter from a Presbyterian asking advice on how to make certain of the Church festivals more colourful. These supplements may be suggestive therefore to those of the brethren who are anxious to balance the audio aids in worship with more vivid visual ones, and yet in a manner which has a long Christian tradition behind it, and not be simply a borrowing from the customs of other faiths.



There may well be disappointment that the Book, and even the supplement, contain little that is obviously 'Indian'. Yet if we can recover some of the liturgical forms of the primitive Church we go to a period when eastern culture was the primary influence. Greek preceded Latin, and that of the colonies in Asia and Africa rather than the motherland, and what of Syriac also? Here at least is one of the claims put forward in the Preface to the new Book. It is claimed that to go back to the earlier is to go behind our divisions and controversies, and find the united stream from which we diverged and which we again seek in unity. That may be our excuse for gathering up now the experience in experiments in worship of the last three decades of our independence from

a western Church, and going forward with them into the future, even if it means taking them into a future of intimate fellowship with others. Yet as Common Prayer has been a focus of a world-wide fellowship, so it may bring nearer a wider fellowship, as we share our store with others and receive what they have to share with us. Already we do this, especially in the tradition of Indian music and song which brings that colour of the culture of the land into our worship, with Indian postures and Indian traditional occasions of worship in the home and in the field.

We do not cease to learn. In due time further treasures will be garnered in further Books, further enriched; till the earth be filled with the praises of God, and all that men do is hallowed by prayer.

## The U.C.N.I. Book of Common Order

REV. VAUGHAN REES

THE General Assembly of the UCNI at its eleventh meeting in 1953 appointed a Committee with the Rev. F. W. Whyte as Convener to prepare a Book of Common Order. This was to be not just another Prayer Book for a minister's use in conducting public worship but something much more than that, namely a guide to the proper public recognition of God's presence and help in almost every event that has to do with the life and work of a congregation. Thanks to the unflagging zeal and tireless efforts of the Convener such a Book, which requires only the addition of a Lectionary to make it complete, was presented to the Thirteenth General Assembly meeting at Mainpuri in November 1959 and accepted for publication.

During the last two or three years I have had the privilege of meeting from time to

time with the Calcutta members of the Committee and sharing in their deliberations. My presence was invited probably out of deference to my long association with the Church in Bengal—twenty-five years working with rural congregations and ten years with an English-speaking city congregation. For this reason too possibly the Editor has asked me to write a "note" to his announcement in this journal of the early publication of the Book.

To some it may seem strange that one who was brought up in the tradition of free or "extempore" prayer and in a church where such prayer with its deep spiritual fervour brought God and His people closely together, should be willing to give even a single "note" of approval to a book of printed prayers; but experience has made me realise how easily such a way of prayer (as the one in which



as brought up) can become not a blessing but a bore! Ministers (and I write as one of them) can become slack and misinterpret *ex tempore* as "obviously unprepared!" Closed eyes" even on the faces of an outwardly devout congregation can mean "closed ears" too and even without a soaring temperature it is all too easy to become inattentive and let one's thoughts wander. To be quite honest such formless worship can only be described as an insult to God.

Such being a not uncommon state of affairs we owe a debt of gratitude to the Rev. Frank Whyte who as a result of unremitting toil and patient search produced a great quantity of material for the consideration of his committee and without a murmur typed and retyped some of it until it met with their approval. Sometimes changes had to be made because of the archaic or unnatural language of the original and always it had to be kept in mind that later on translations would have to be made into regional languages. Mr Whyte, though brought up as a Congregationalist, was not content to try to improve a simple Free Church Order of service by inserting a few well-known and appropriate collects or responses from the Anglican Book of Common Prayer. Rather, with his wide catholic taste he has made available for our use and profit new treasures of devotion from the traditional worship of the Reformed churches and has adapted even earlier liturgical forms. As a result the UCNI will very soon (it is hoped) have, as a guide, forms of worship which combine the dignified and solemn language of a great tradition with the needs and thoughts of today.

Although this is only a preliminary "Note" would not like to bring it to an end without referring to the gratitude that has been expressed by the compilers of this new Book

to the Synod of the CSI for permission, so readily given, to include in it their own Service of the Lord's Supper or the Holy Eucharist. There is also included in it an "Order for Worship in Village Churches", in the preparation of which much valuable help was obtained from Bishop Loyd's "A Village Service Book". In this Order a place is found for "the sermon", thus bringing it into line with the Reformed Church view that no Sunday service—not even Holy Communion—is complete without the preaching of the Word; that too is a Sacrament in that it makes the gospel relevant to our daily life. It is earnestly hoped that a Lectionary will be added, and that even when only a few of the Sunday service orders are translated, ministers everywhere will be encouraged to make regular use of it. The frequent reading of favourite passages, often chosen haphazardly, is to be greatly deprecated and to some extent accounts for the scanty knowledge that so many church-goers have of the Bible.

Finally let me stress again that the Book is a *guide* to public worship, and that while the orders are not intended to be followed in every detail; yet they aim to save worship from being careless and slovenly by combining the dignified and solemn language of a great tradition with a natural spontaneous expression of the needs and thoughts of today. Furthermore, its main purpose is not to provide a form of words that can be used to persuade God to do something for us, but rather to provide the means whereby we may come to know God's will and so to link ourselves to Him that we become channels of His power and love. As the Convener of the Committee has written in the Introduction, this Book of Common Order is offered not only to the UCNI but also to the greater United Church for which we long and labour.





# An Impression of the Negotiating Committee on Church Union

REV. BRUCE HENRY

I found it a really cosmopolitan and multi-ecclesiastical occasion. Prelates, Presbyters, Principals, Pastors, Priests and Pundits were in attendance — clear-minded clerics and level-headed laymen all pooling their opinions. Colours, too, varied from Anglican purple to nonconformist khaki.

Many shades of theological colour could be seen, too, though it must be said that they were only varying shades of one basic colour. Our oneness in loyalty to the Head of the Church, Jesus Christ our Lord, and our common desire for the unity of His Body were obviously more fundamental than our points of difference. But at meetings of this kind it is natural for the differences to come into prominence. In fact the meeting exists for the sharing and study of various points of view in the hope of finding a common basis for united enterprise.

## A Sense of Fellowship

At the meeting it was clear to me that many differences of opinion were being submerged for the common weal, and only those of radical significance were being discussed. Controversial matters were freely discussed, of course, and sometimes matters were not minced. Humour was like a stabiliser on several occasions, keeping the Committee on an even keel when discussion showed bolsterous tendencies.

I experienced a fellowship among us, however, which was most evident when we met for worship in the chapel. Our oneness in prayer and worship, led by brethren from different churches, and the warmth of informal discussion outside the conference room were significant of a practical unity transcending the bounds of Church order. There was also an *esprit de corps* among the old hands; a mutual understanding and appreciation among brethren who had previously met one another in similar circumstances, so much so that sharp witticism was harmlessly parried by laughter. I appreciated

this candour, and wished that the same kind of trust and freedom, the same warmth of fellowship, could be found around the Table of the Lord, without the binding provision of the Plan of Union. It is a fact that the human heart often outstrips the mind, and that is where I think the Plan errs. It is too precise, too guarded; it leaves insufficient to God's guidance. In the interests of order and consistency it has built for us a fence before ever we have discovered where our spiritual boundary exists. To my mind it restricts the heart's urge and tells us in too much detail just how we should grow together.

## The Unexpected

The Committee produced surprises. We went to Jubbulpore anticipating a general re-opening of discussion on the Plan, in view of amendments being proposed by several of the negotiating churches. Some of these proposals were radical, affecting not only the Inaugural Procedure of Union but also the Constitution. I was amazed, therefore, soon after the meeting had begun to learn that the Anglican delegation wished to withdraw their suggested amendments. They had received word from a group of representative bishops in the UK (supported by the Archbishop of Canterbury) that certain amendments proposed at the Lambeth Conference need not now be pressed. In view of this the Anglican delegation sought only certain verbal changes in Part II of the Plan, and modifications in the Service of Inauguration.

The second surprise arose out of the Anglican withdrawal. A representative of the Methodist Church of Southern Asia whose delegation had also come to the Committee armed with a formidable list of proposed amendments, dramatically offered to withdraw them all on condition that no one else's amendments be entertained. Despite a measure of sabre-rattling by this delegation there was an audible sigh of relief on the part of many, at the thought of not having



to re-open discussion on the Plan. Accordingly a resolution was carried, ruling out discussion on any amendments.

Dramatic and generous as the MCSA gesture was, it left me with misgivings. Were the MCSA content with the Plan in its present form? Was the withdrawal of their amendments merely in the interests of peace and a quiet life, or was it a genuine feeling that the Plan was *workable*, from their point of view, in its present form? Their suggested amendments reflected doubts regarding the interpretation of 'Episcopate' in the Plan, and as to whether their Episcopate was being accorded adequate value and significance. The MCSA delegation's withdrawal did not hide what they were thinking. So their intention to put the Plan in its present form to their constituency certainly represents a considerable sacrifice.

A result of the MCSA delegation's action was to put the Baptist group (and others of similar persuasion) into an awkward position. For whilst the Church Union Sub-committee of the Council of Baptist Churches in Northern India had previously passed a resolution that the Plan, *as it stands*, be put to its constituency, a subsequent meeting of that Sub-committee had resolved that in view of proposed amendments by other negotiating churches they too wished to propose certain amendments to the Plan. When, therefore, all amendments were ruled out at the Negotiating Committee, the Baptists might logically have been expected to welcome the general *exeat*. But this was not the case. Doubtless some Baptists did feel like this, but others clearly welcomed the chance of re-entering the fray at least on the baptism/re-baptism issue. When, therefore, all amendments were ruled out, strategy had to be changed and the Baptists resorted to another tactic. They asked for clarification of para 7 in the Appendix on Baptism. In the case of someone baptised in infancy who insisted on receiving believer's baptism as the only means of satisfying his conscience, would the bishop be able to grant permission? As might be expected, replies to this query came mainly from the Anglican delegation. Some said *Yes* and some said *Nay*—and bishops represented both these points of view. So the clarification was not forthcoming. In view of this and the feeling by some of the Baptist and allied groups that without some definite

clarification on this issue there might be slender chances of their constituencies entering the Union, a proposal was made to excise the entire Appendix on Baptism from the Plan, on the ground that it was not part of the Constitution and that such action need not be regarded as an amendment. However, the meeting was clearly against precipitate action in regard to either of these points, so the whole issue was referred back to a freshly constituted Sub-committee on baptism, for further study and recommendation.

### With whom do we negotiate?

An unfortunate feature of negotiations in regard to Anglican opinions was the fact that we appeared to be negotiating not with Anglicans of the Church in India, but with Lambeth. If Lambeth were 'tough' on an issue the Anglican delegation would be of similar texture; and when certain leading prelates in the UK gave a green light, then only were the Anglican negotiators prepared to withdraw their suggested amendments. Our hope, however, of effective Union in India does not rest with Western approval, nor will pressure from the older churches assist the younger at this stage. If the churches in India, whilst respecting the opinions of their parent bodies, can nevertheless break away from hide-bound traditions and catch the vision of united life and witness as God leads them, boldly stepping forward in faith and courage, there is hope of a more generous give and take in the Experiment of Union and of a more rapid and trustful coming together under one name. Incidentally, of all the churches involved it appears to me that the Anglican Church has most ground for satisfaction in regard to the Plan, for it is basically Anglican in pattern.

### Some Misgivings

Another impression I gained during discussions at the Negotiating Committee was that insufficient provision has been made in the plan for rural churches. I think of two examples.

Take first the matter of administration of the sacraments. In chapter 6 para 17 of the Plan it is laid down that only those who have by ordination received authority thereto can administer Holy Communion. Para 14 on page 16 of the Plan somewhat mitigates this, but even so the rule poses difficulties for



some rural churches. I have worked for over 14 years in the hill tracts of Orissa, among primitive people where there is a rapidly growing Church. I cannot see how the 87 churches of this district, scattered over the mountains, often in lonely jungle places, sometimes separated from one another by ten or fifteen miles of difficult terrain, could be adequately served with the Lord's Supper by ordained celebrants alone—unless indeed the word 'ordination' were understood to include a kind of special Licence which could be withdrawn when no longer necessary, or for other reasons. Normally it is the practice in these churches for the pastor or assistant pastor (the latter not ordained) to administer the Sacrament once a month to each church. Each of these ministers has to serve on the average three churches. Mercifully the plan appears less particular regarding who should administer Baptism!

The other example concerns discipline. According to para (g) on page 14 of the Plan only the bishop has power to suspend from Holy Communion. This rule would either require the bishop to spend an inordinate amount of time in certain areas dealing with such matters of indiscipline, or else result in lax discipline and a decadent church.

Doubtless all these matters have been discussed at one stage or another during negotiations. Even so, to me it would appear more practicable to entrust at least powers of temporary suspension from Communion to the church panchayat, which under Chapter XIII para 1 is already empowered to exercise normal church discipline. Obviously, in these circumstances the church panchayat, session or similar body would need to be guided by certain rules of the United Church.

Since Jubbulpore I have thought even more about Church Union, and the Plan. My mind comes back repeatedly to the need for more adaptability in the Plan, which virtually means somewhat less definition and less guarded provision. Even the New Testament has its ecclesiastical and theological inconsistencies and anomalies, largely because of human frailty and the exigencies of Christian life in those days. And in the long run perhaps it will be found that the Church which is most acceptable to its Lord is the one where love finds greater emphasis than law, and where a fellowship of spiritually-minded believers has grown up without too precise a constitution—an empiric Union of give and take which enjoys many fields of rich worship and witness, but has not sought to fence them in too soon.

---

"We believe the time has come when the several Churches which we represent should be asked to make a decision: are they for or against the Catholic Faith in its fulness, the gospel of Jesus Christ, borne witness to in Scripture, made effective through the gospel sacraments, protected by the Church's creeds, brought to light anew at the Reformation and in the Evangelical Revival? However haltingly, we can but put the issue before our Churches and pray that their Yes when given may be to the gospel and their No only to every imperfection in our way of putting the question".

*The Faith of the Church, Australia.*





# An Impression of the Negotiating Committee

*Jubbulpore, Dec. 2-4, 1959.*

RT. REV. CHANDU RAY

**W**E met at Jubbulpore from Dec. 2 to 4, in the Leonard Theological College. The hospitality was most gracious and the food excellent and sumptuous. This gave us a good start on non-theological factors.

The Secretary had circulated a number of papers beforehand. There were questions in the minds of many delegates about the matters which had been considered before and which were being re-opened. Thus there was a spirit of prayer and mutual regard to understand each other's point of view.

Not all the members of the Negotiating Committee were able to arrive until the evening of 2nd December, including the Chairman, Rev. C.C. Pande, and the "formidable four" from Serampore. In the absence of the Chairman, Dr. E.C. Bhatta was voted to the Chair. With the support of our indefatigable and methodical Secretary, Archdeacon T.D. Sully, the Chairman dealt with the routine business expeditiously.

## A Problem of Procedure

At the very outset, when the Minutes of the Pachmarli meeting were being considered, a question was asked if the Proposed Services for Inauguration had received the same careful and detailed consideration as the *Plan of Union*, and whether there was not room for verbal and procedural changes in the Proposed Services? This was to a large measure the crux of the Jubbulpore meeting.

As the schedule on the first day was fairly light, the different delegations were able to consult with one another, and the opinion was more and more crystallised that as long as the *Plan of Union*, Parts I and II were not amended, the Proposed Services could be altered.

By the morning of the 3rd December, the Chairman, Rev. C. C. Pande, was asked for a definite ruling on this point, and the Committee decided by a sure vote that no proposals should be entertained for amendments to the *Plan of Union*, third edition published in 1957. The Chair then ruled that consideration may be given to the Proposed Services,

and it was voted that verbal and procedural alterations may be made provided they did not require amendment to the Plan of Union.

## The Lifting of Clouds

The leader of the delegation of the CIPBC then gave a lucid and reasoned review of the theological debate on the *Plan of Union* which had taken place at the Lambeth Conference in 1958, and the consequent request of the Episcopal Synod for certain modifications. Both he and the Bishop of Bombay had had correspondence and personal interviews with the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Bishop of Chelmsford (Chairman) and the Bishop of Exeter (Vice-chairman) of the Committee on Church Unity of the Lambeth Conference, and as a result of these consultations, he was now able to say that his delegation will be willing not to press for any amendments to the Plan of Union provided Step Two of the Service of Inauguration, which brought together the two episcopates, could be enacted separately in anticipation of the Inauguration of Union, and then the whole ministry of each uniting church could be offered for Unification as in Step Three at present, in a separate service with the following verbal and procedural changes:

- i. That the Prayer in the Unification of the ministry on pages 8—9 of the Proposed Services be said together by one representative minister from each of the churches now united.

- ii. That in the prayer, after the words "exercise of his ministry" on page 9, it should be mentioned "as presbyter" or "as bishop".

- iii. That there should be consistency in mentioning the "Church of God" before the words "within the Church of North India/Pakistan."

He further pointed out that the possibility of Step Two and Step Three being separated already existed in the *Plan of Union*, Part II, page 52, in the footnote about the Church of Pakistan, and again in the Proposed Services footnote on page 5, which visualised a



separate service in Pakistan at a later date for the Unification of the Ministry.

He concluded that the request of the Synod of the CIPBC could be met by verbal and procedural changes in the Proposed Services, without amending the *Plan of Union*.

The leader of the United Church of Northern India then reported that his Church had already voted to accept the *Plan of Union*, as revised in the Third Edition 1957, and if the *Plan* was in any form amended then for legal and other reasons it would have to be referred back to the General Assembly, which would not normally meet for three years.

He went on to say that the General Assembly of the UCNI had requested that the interpretation of the ministry as had been published in their journal and in *Church Union News and Views* of August 1957, be received by the Negotiating Committee. He further requested that it be also published as an appendix to the *Plan of Union*.

In view of the earlier decisions, it was decided by the vote of the Negotiating Committee, that while they would agree to the first part, to receive the Statement, they could not agree to the second part of the request, to publish the same as an appendix to the *Plan*.

At this juncture the Committee ended its morning session for lunch. This provided a very welcome break for consultations by the delegations with their members.

The dramatic moment came after lunch when the leader of the delegation of the Methodist Church in Southern Asia made an announcement that they had decided to withdraw all their amendments. He expressed his view that the Church Union Committee of the MCSA had not realised that the suggestions made by the Anglican Church would be verbal and procedural in the Proposed Services. Now that this matter was clear to them, they were ready to withdraw all the proposed amendments and to recommend the *Plan of Union* to their General Assembly for acceptance.

The British and the Australian Methodist delegation reported that they had already set in motion the machinery for the acceptance of the *Plan of Union*.

### Continuing Doubts

The Baptist group, however, had some questions concerning the interpretation of some of the clauses in Appendix B on pages

42-53 of the *Plan of Union*. They proposed some amendments. This situation had arisen partly because the "Sub-committee on problems connected with Baptism (vide Appendix B)" which was appointed by the Negotiating Committee at Pachmari in 1957, had not met to consider these problems.

It was, therefore, suggested that Appendix B might be deleted from the *Plan of Union* without violating any principle. This suggestion was fully discussed but it was not decided to omit Appendix B from the *Plan* at this stage. This may be done, if so recommended only after full consideration has been given by the Sub-Committee which was reconstituted. On the whole, the Baptist group is not yet fully satisfied with the present wording.

### The Forward Look

On the morning of 4th December, after many informal conversations had taken place over the night, and much prayer had been offered in humble spirit to God for guidance, the Negotiating Committee decided to recommend the *Plan of Union* (third revised edition 1957) to the churches for their decision, and agreed to verbal and procedural changes in the Proposed Services as follows:

1. That Step I of the Service of Inauguration of Union and Step II of bringing together the two Episcopates, take place on the first day;

2. that Step III, of Representative Act of Unification of the Ministry, and Step IV, of the Declaration and Confirmation of the appointment of existing bishops and consecration of new bishops, with the verbal and procedural changes in Step III suggested by the Anglicans, take place on the second day.

The Continuation Committee was therefore empowered to take into consideration these recommendations and prepare the Services for Inauguration.

Thus ended this historic meeting of the Negotiating Committee to which we came with doubts and questions, but left with assurance in our hearts that the Lord through His Spirit had guided us in our negotiations and had given us a deeper understanding and mutual regard for one another, enriching our fellowship. It was the earnest hope of the Negotiating Committee that the Church of North India and the Church of Pakistan will be formed in 1963.



## Actions of the UCNi

# Resolutions of the Thirteenth General Assembly of the United Church of Northern India

*held at Mainpuri November 1959*

It was Resolved :

2 (a) That, having studied the Plan of Church Union in North India and Pakistan in its Third Edition (1957), and having heard the report of their Committee on Church Union, based on the examination of the Plan and consideration of comments made by Church Councils and other bodies, the General Assembly declare that they are of the opinion that the United Church of Northern India may enter on a wider union on the basis of the Constitution set out in Part I of the Plan, and by the Procedure set out in Part II, without endangering the evangelical principles for which this Church stands.

(b) That accordingly the General Assembly give notice in terms of the Constitution, Chapter XII (i), and following the procedure laid down in Chapter XII (iii), that with effect from a date to be mutually agreed upon by the Negotiating Churches, the United Church of Northern India/Pakistan shall merge its identity in the Church of North India/Pakistan with those other negotiating bodies who also accept the Plan, the *Confession of Faith* being retained as one of the doctrinal standards acceptable to the Church of North India/Pakistan (see Plan I, IV, 4 (6)) and the Constitution, so far as it applies to all Courts of the Church higher than that of the Session, being superseded by the Constitution of the Church of North India/Pakistan.

(c) That in the event of any other negotiating body which has accepted the Plan requesting any changes in the procedure for consummation of the union, which would not affect the substance of the proposals now approved, necessary action may be taken by

the Inaugural Committee (Plan II, IV).

(d) That in the event that two or more of the Negotiating Churches fail to approve the Plan, the General Assembly instruct their Negotiators to meet the representatives of the remaining Churches in order to modify the Plan of Union appropriately.

(e) That, in declaring their readiness to enter this Union, the General Assembly in no way deny the validity of their existing Ministry, but on the contrary give thanks for the gracious gift of God which has given it its validity and sufficiency. They accept the representative Act for the unification of the Ministry, not as necessary in all situations, but as appropriate to the existing situation in North India and Pakistan; and they see in the Plan of Union, a continuation of that system of Church Government which this Church has practised and has always recognized as founded on and agreeable to the word of God.

3. (a) That the General Assembly accept as authoritative the statement of the United Church of Northern India's interpretation of the unification of the Ministry prepared by the Committee on Church Union and already published in THE UNITED CHURCH REVIEW (July 1957); direct that it be printed in the official records of their Assembly and that it be communicated to the Negotiating Committee with the request that it be printed in the records of that body.

(b) That the General Assembly further request the Negotiating Committee to include the above mentioned statement in the Plan as an appendix in the same section as the present Appendix C (Baptist declaration of Principle).

---

The moment the Church ceases to put "the word of the Cross" in the centre of its life and begins to rely upon some possession of its own, it becomes a carnal association.

Newbigin : *The Reunion of the Church*

## Actions of the CIPBC

*Note:* The Episcopal Synod and the General Council of the CIPBC met in the first half of January at Calcutta and very carefully considered both the plan of Union for North India and Pakistan and the Scheme for Ceylon. Both received general approval in the General Council by very large majorities in the Houses of Bishops, Clergy and Laity. The form of the resolution for the North India/Pakistan Plan was drafted by the Episcopal Synod and with some slight amendment was accepted by the General Council in the form given below.

This means that the plan will now go to all Diocesan Councils and should again come up, unless there should be any unforeseen delay, for what may be a final decision at the next meeting of the General Council some three years hence. In the meantime we seek to ascertain the attitude of the other parts of the Anglican Communion in respect of relations of full communion with the proposed united Church.

The preamble endeavours to make clear

to Anglicans, both here and abroad, that the procedure for Inauguration and for the Unification of the Ministry meets their requirements and should remove all scruples and doubts. The character of the united ministry so clearly includes the essentials of the historic episcopal order, that it should secure the recognition not only of the Anglican Communion, but also of those other episcopal churches, such as the Old Catholics and the churches in Kerala, with which the Anglican Church is already, or hopes to be, in relations of communion.

The preamble observes the general understanding that, while we are all fully agreed in humbly seeking from God what He wills to bestow for the fullness of the threefold ministry of the united Church, we must inevitably interpret what is being done in accordance with our own convictions and traditions, without demanding that those in other traditions should accept our interpretations as a condition of the inauguration of union.

*T. Donald Sully*

---

## The Decision

### A. Preamble

THE General Council receives the third edition of the Plan of Church Union in North India and Pakistan, adopted by the Negotiating Committee at its meeting at Pachmarhi in April 1957, and sent to the negotiating churches for decision.

The General Council notes with satisfaction that the instructions given to its delegates by Decision 30 of its last meeting, with regard to Confirmation, have been successfully carried out.

The General Council notes that its delegates were able to secure, according to Decision 29 of the last meeting, considerable improvements in the procedure for the bringing together of the episcopates and the unification of the ministry.

The General Council records that :—

(a) The Preface to the Prayer and Formula at the 'Bringing together of the Episcopates'

expresses sufficiently clearly the Anglican view that the historic episcopate is being conveyed to the bishops of the Methodist Church in Southern Asia, and believes that the Preface, Prayer, especially as now amended on the advice of the Lambeth Conference, and the Formula should by God's grace achieve this end, as well as enabling the bishops of the CIPBC to enter into the spiritual heritage of the episcopal branch of the Methodist Church. It notes that the Formula at the Laying on of hands, as well as the Preface, limits this Step to these purposes, and does not by itself constitute them bishops in the Churches of North India and Pakistan.

(b) The statement of Intention in the Representative Act of the Unification of the Ministry, taken with the Preface in the Service, sufficiently expresses the intention that all the participants shall become ministers in a threefold ministry of bishops, presbyters and deacons which is to be reverently used and



esteemed in the united Churches of North India and Pakistan. In leaving it to the wisdom of God to determine what is to be bestowed on each participant, which we may expect to be different in each case, it is on the human level legitimate to place different interpretations upon what God does in the Act. Thus it is our conviction that in the rite episcopal ordination is bestowed upon those not previously so ordained, though it does not repeat any ordination previously received; while the Prayers, the laying on of hands and the Formula, taken in conjunction with the Preface, have been judged adequate to convey Holy Orders in the historic succession. The declaration made by each participant in the Act gives assurance of his intention humbly to receive in the rite "such grace, commission and authority" as God wills to bestow on him, which intention will surely be fulfilled by the grace of God in response to the Prayer and the laying on of hands with the Formula. The Prayer has now been amended in accordance with the advice of the Lambeth Conference, and will be said together by one representative from each of the uniting Churches, our representative being a bishop.

(c) The Committee on Church Unity and the Church Universal of the Lambeth Conference of 1958 has generally approved the provisions of Part I of the Plan of Union. In Part II the participation of the bishops both in the 'Bringing together of the Episcopates' and the Representative Act, in which similar prayers are said over the bishops twice within a short space of time, has caused confusion and has even raised doubts as to their efficacy. But in each case the intention expressed in the Preface and Formula differs. There is no doubt that it is the first of the two which provides consecration in the historic succession to the Methodist bishops. In the second all the bishops, being now in the historic succession, neither can nor do receive any further consecration, but are brought into the common ministry of the

Church of North India and the Church of Pakistan in which the inheritances of the uniting Churches are combined and transcended. If this is clearly understood, the doubts felt in the Committee at Lambeth should be dispelled.

## B. Resolution

The General Council renders thanks to Almighty God for the manifest guidance of the Holy Spirit in the negotiations for Church Union in North India and Pakistan during the last thirty years, and particularly in the progress made in recent years.

Having considered the recommendations of the Lambeth Conference of 1958, together with the further advice received through His Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury, and also the decisions taken by the Negotiating Committee on Church Union, after the publication of the 3rd Edition of the Plan, at its meeting at Jabalpur on December 2nd to 4th, 1959, the General Council, acting under Canon I of Chapter XLII of the Constitution, Canons, and Rules, gives general approval to the Plan of Church Union (3rd Edition), Parts I and II, and refers the Plan to the Diocesan Councils for consideration and the passing of resolutions of general approval or disapproval.

In taking this action it trusts that the other Churches and Provinces of the Anglican Communion will find it possible to enter into relations of full communion with the united churches from their inauguration.

Further the General Council requests His Grace the Metropolitan to refer to the Metropolitans of the other Churches and Provinces of the Anglican Communion the question whether they will be prepared to enter into relations of full communion with the united Churches from their inauguration, that the Church of this Province may come to its final decision in the light of their replies.

---

The enthusiasm of the younger Churches for reunion is not merely the particular point of view of a minority movement; it is the fruit of an act of obedience to the Gospel.

Newblgin : *The Reunion of the Church*



## Resolutions of the Council of Baptist Churches in Northern India

November 1959

5. The CBCNI recognises that any Plan of Union inevitably requires modifications in the customs and the rules of churches entering into Union. They do not therefore press for amendments to be made on all points concerning which they feel a measure of uneasiness. Baptists have strongly insisted on the liberty of the individual Christian believer and on the liberty of the local Christian congregation from imposition of beliefs and practices from other authorities. The CBCNI appreciates the fact that the Plan inevitably involves a measure of restriction of such liberty in the interests of harmonious co-operation and fellowship with others. In certain matters, however, these restrictions appear to go too far.

6. The CBCNI therefore recommends the following amendments to the Plan in order to remove the grave objections still felt by many Baptists who are otherwise eager for Union :

- (i) To Part I, Chapter XV, para 7, add a further sub-para (e) :

"The CNI/P will be willing to admit communicant members of other churches, even though not in full communion with any of the uniting churches, to membership of the CNI/P, or to admit lay readers or ordained ministers of such churches to minister in the CNI/P, subject to such constitutional provisions as are made by the CNI/P."

- (ii) In Appendix B, para 2: Either substitute after "one Baptism" in the 7th line the following, "as there is one Lord and one Faith" and delete the rest of the sentence; or insert before the word "unrepeatable" the word "normally" and delete the words "in the life of any one person, no matter by which practice it was administered."

- (iii) In para 7 delete the words "pastoral advice and" in the last line.

- (iv) In Part II Chapter VII, para 13, line 6, insert before "reordination" the words "ordination nor".

7. The CBCNI further places on record that unless it is understood that Appendix B para 7 does provide for the bishop to have power to exercise discretion to permit baptism as a believer notwithstanding the normal principal expressed in para 2, it is improbable that the Baptist churches in India will enter the United Church on the basis of the present Plan; and that after the Union of churches (whether including Baptists or not) there is likelihood of separations occurring on this very issue. The CBCNI believes that it is better for guarded provision to be made to satisfy conscience than for persons on the grounds of conscience to separate from the proposed United Church or surreptitiously to seek baptism at the hands of persons outside the United Church.





# Book Review

**"The Faith of the Church":** Report of a Joint Commission on Church Union set up by the Congregational, Methodist and Presbyterian Churches of Australia; Price 2/6d.

In the North India Plan of Union, the common faith of the negotiating churches is set out in a few short but pregnant sentences. In the circumstances of North India, the churches have recognised each other as essentially proclaiming the same Gospel, and have been content to point to it briefly. In the conversations which have been conducted between the Church of South India and the Lutheran churches we understand that questions of doctrine have received much greater attention and it is as these churches, through earnest joint enquiry, have reached the conviction that they are fundamentally at one in the Gospel which they proclaim that they have reached a stage for further advance.

This Report from Australia seems to indicate that the three ecclesiastical bodies jointly responsible for it have felt it right to approach the problems of visible unity more along the lines of the doctrinal study, rather than by that emphasis on Church order which has been more central in North India. As a result they have produced a document which impressively declares the Faith for today, and shows what a deep harmony there is among Christian people concerning the Gospel which they seek to serve. It is true that we are promised a second report on "The Structure of the Church", but certainly there is enough here to raise in an acute form the question of why Christians who are so

heartily at one in their faith should continue to be organised in separate bodies.

The joint authors are modest in their claims, frankly stating the limitations of which they are conscious in such words as these:

The great traditions of the Churches of Eastern Christendom have as yet scarcely touched our imagination . . . the peculiar insights and experience of the Anglican and Lutheran Churches have, as yet, scarcely penetrated our mind, or engaged our sympathy".

A reader can detect the powerful influence of Karl Barth and his school on much of the interpretation. Nevertheless, the authors have produced a valuable exposition of the place of the Scriptures, of Creeds and Confessions in the life of the Church and have given a notable interpretation of the faith once for all delivered to the saints. In their keen awareness of the situation facing the Church in Australia they have felt a compulsion to attempt a fresh statement of the Faith itself, which may be studied with profit by many beyond their own shores.

The final section declares that the Churches are called to make their commitment in Faith, in Love and in Hope, and in the second part of this section we are reminded of this truth about the Church: "Her structure must show forth the life of love". Surely this does point to something that is of the esse of the Church.

W. S.



### Writers in this number

The Rt. Rev. W. Q. Lash is Bishop of Bombay and a member of the delegation of the CIPBC on the Negotiating Committee.

The Rev. Vaughan Rees is a missionary of the London Missionary Society and minister of Union Chapel, Calcutta, UCNI.

The Rev. Bruce Henry is a missionary of the Baptist Missionary Society serving in Orissa, and a member of the delegation of the CBCNI.

The Rt. Rev. Chandu Ray is Bishop in Karachi of the CIPBC and a member of the delegation of that Church.





